

A1
Other metals, such as gold, zinc, copper and cerium, have also been found to possess antimicrobial properties, both alone and in combination with silver. These and other metals have been shown to provide antimicrobial behavior even in minute quantities, a property referred to as "oligodynamic."

Please delete the first full paragraph on page 22 of the specification and replace it with the following paragraph:

A2
Silver nitrate is the most soluble of the salts present in the composition and will be released rapidly upon initial exposure of the coating to body fluid. Silver lactate, which has a lower solubility than silver nitrate but a higher solubility than the other salts present, will be released next. Then, the silver acetate, followed by the silver citrate, and then the silver chloride, and, lastly, the silver iodide will be released from the coating composition based upon their relative solubilities.

Please delete the first full paragraph on page 25 of the specification and replace it with the following paragraph:

A3
As noted above, any polymer can be used to form the compositions of the present invention. When hydrophilic polymers are used, it is preferable that the polymers be soluble in water or in organic solvents containing some water. The ability to add water to the polymer composition without precipitating the polymer allows the addition of water-soluble salts directly to the coating composition. The use of water in the polymer composition increases the solubility of the salts,

AB resulting in the formation of finer more stable colloids. However, it takes longer for the coating compositions to dry when the water content is very high. For this reason, the preferred amount of water in the hydrophilic polymer compositions is about 50% or less. Such concentrations provide for faster drying times while maintaining the beneficial properties provided by the water in the composition.

[Please delete the second full paragraph on page 26 of the specification and replace it with the following paragraph:

AY Examples of water-soluble silver salts suitable for use in the present invention include, but are not limited to, silver nitrate, silver acetate and silver lactate. Examples of salts which are soluble in alcohols and organic solvents include, but are not limited to, silver nitrate, sodium iodide, sodium lactate, sodium propionate, sodium salicylate, zinc chloride, zinc acetate, zinc salicylate, gold trichloride, gold tribromide, palladium chloride and hydrogen-hexachloroplatinate.

[Please delete the first full paragraph on page 44 of the specification and replace it with the following paragraph:

AS Different oligodynamic salts have different water solubilities. This allows for tailoring of the composition to provide a specific release profile of the antimicrobial agent(s) from the composition. For example, sodium chloride, zinc iodide, sodium citrate, sodium acetate, and sodium lactate can be added to a coating composition containing silver nitrate to produce a coating which contains